

MD's Families Said More Prone to Join Cults

REGINA—Physicians' children are at high risk for being recruited into cult groups, an anti-cultist told physicians at the recent meeting of the CFPC Saskatchewan chapter.

Professionals' children make up a "high percentage" of cult membership, with as many if not more from physicians' families than other professional groups, said Rev. Colin Clay, chaplain at the University of Saskatchewan.

The most vulnerable age group is 18-25, usually from an affluent background, he noted. Their family unit is often not cohesive due to excessive time demands on at least one of the parents, and the children, who are well-educated and idealistic, react against their parents' values, he said. "These are not the drop-outs of society", he commented.

Confused about values, they can be drawn into cults, being told that their families are "Satanic", and with the promise that they'll be working for humanitarian causes, Rev. Clay said. However, when he questioned some cult members about where proceeds from their groups' fund-raising activities would go—from selling flowers, records and books on street corners and door-to-door—he was given several answers, including to UNICEF and for an alcoholics' rehabilitation centre. "Despite what the devotees say, the money does not go to humanitarian causes", he said. "Young people don't go into cults of their own free will—they don't know what they're getting into".

Governments are reluctant to intervene in what is seen as areas of religion, he noted. But most cults are *not* religious organizations, he feels: "I'm committed to freedom of religion, but cults abuse the words 'freedom' and 'religion'".

The groups are directed by one, or in some cases two messianic leaders whose writings have the authority of Scripture, he said. They often have extensive business interests and other than humanitarian goals, he added. He noted that Rev. Sun Myung Moon owns factories producing arms, pharmaceuticals and tea, and works to get his followers into political power.

In addition to using deceit in recruiting, the groups also use manipulative techniques to keep members, he added. They live communally and are isolated from the real world, he said. Members are never left alone, out of the company of other members, and their phone calls are monitored. They are also given a poor diet, allowed lit-

tle sleep and work up to 16 hours per day raising money, he said. One group—the children of God, headed by David Moses Berg—uses female members as prostitutes and males as pimps, he maintained.

There is, in fact, little room for personal development because members are told everything to do, Rev. Clay claimed. He cited the case of a Harvard graduate who, when brought out of a cult, was found to have stunted emotional and intellectual growth. "These kids are just floating—they need expert help in rehabilitation", he commented.

Parents must keep in touch, at least by phone, he advised. Visiting the young person and trying to persuade him to leave sometimes works, he added. "People in cults know they're

powerless to come out—they need someone to bring them out", he said.

Sometimes they can be brought out with a custody order, or by deprogrammers who "all act with great love and concern", he claimed.

"Be kind to cult members—they're being manipulated", Rev. Clay said. "It helps more than anything to treat them with love. Then they'll see that the world isn't Satanic".

He recommended that physicians notify the police if they hear about a cult working in their area, and that they phone radio stations if they see members recruiting or selling door-to-door. He suggested that if young people are aware of the groups' existence and are informed about their workings, they may be able to avoid being drawn in.

Former CMA Pres. Urges FPs To Get Involved in Politics

REGINA—Community involvement—particularly in a political party—is the best way to improve the medical profession's public image.

Public relations campaigns in the print and electronic media proposed by some medical associations are not only costly but may be ineffective and unnecessary, Dr. E. W. Barootes told the annual meeting of the College of Family Physicians' Saskatchewan chapter here last month.

More would be achieved if physicians took part in organized community groups, said Dr. Barootes, a retired urologist and former president of the Canadian Medical Association.

"With most physicians now on rotas, an evening or two in the week given in such involvement for you and your family is not only worthwhile for the community, but is excellent diversion, and can be most pleasant and fulfilling", he said. "We must get out of our isolated and insulated medical cocoons and join in the volunteerism of our society".

Social, cultural, recreational, ethnic, fraternal, and religious groups all offer outlets for volunteer activity, but he particularly urged physicians and their families to join and become active in the political party whose policies are most consistent with their own thinking.

"Don't expect every policy of your party to coincide with your opinion, or that your own vested interest will always be upheld", Dr. Barootes

warned. "But you have a chance to voice your view and maybe influence that of others in the party. Don't remain outside in the cold and gripe about what is being done inside the house.

"Your participation may at times seem frustrating, on occasion time-consuming, and even disappointing when success is not immediately apparent. But it can be satisfying—and I assure you that lawyers, teachers, social workers and clergy find it rewarding. So might you if you try it".



Barootes: MDs must get out of insulated medical cocoons.